



United States Mission to the OSCE

Freedom of Movement in Moldova

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
March 22, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States is troubled by an incident that took place in Moldova on March 16th. Diplomatic personnel accredited to the U.S. Embassy in Chisinau attempted to pay a routine visit to the OSCE branch office in Tiraspol, but were blocked from entering the region at two separate checkpoints manned by Transnistrian authorities.

Mr. Chairman, the Transnistrian region does not have the right to block access to diplomats; it is not a sovereign state and there is no international border for anyone crossing from one bank of the Nistru River to the other. The actions are in contravention of the 1992 ceasefire agreement, which calls for the elimination of impediments to the movement of goods, services and people in the region.

The United States Embassy is for all of Moldova, and that includes the Transnistrian region. Such incidents hinder the ability of our accredited personnel to conduct diplomacy. This is a serious and unacceptable situation, particularly as the United States is an observer to the Five-Plus-Two negotiating process.

We call on the Transnistrian authorities to end this restriction immediately, and we appeal to the Russian Federation to use its influence with those authorities to resolve this matter.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.